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10/693,555	10/24/2003	Jerome S. Veith	659-1148	3611

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EXAMINER

HAND, MELANIE JO

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3761

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/16/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

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Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/693,555	Applicant(s) VEITH, JEROME S.	
	Examiner Melanie J. Hand	Art Unit 3761	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 November 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f):
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments, see Remarks, filed November 21, 2006, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1-23 under 35 U.S.C. 103 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of a newly found prior art reference.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1-4 and 7-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Van Gompel et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,217,563) in view of Arndt et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,720,471).

With respect to **claim 1**: Van Gompel teaches a disposable absorbent garment 10 comprising: a body chassis having a terminal front waist edge 76, a terminal back waist edge 76 longitudinally spaced from said terminal front waist edge 76 (Fig. 1), a first length defined between said terminal front waist edge and said terminal back waist edge, and a laterally extending centerline defined half way between said terminal front and back waist edges 76, wherein said body chassis is formed from a laminate structure having a plurality of layers, wherein all of said layers have the same length such that a thickness of said body chassis is the same along said length of said layers; and an absorbent insert 32 fixedly secured to said body chassis, said absorbent insert 32 comprising a retention region 48 comprising an absorbent material, said retention region 48 having first and second longitudinally spaced boundaries and a second length defined

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between said first and second boundaries, and wherein there is no absorbent material disposed longitudinally outside of said retention region defined between said first and second boundaries.

('563, Col. 3, lines 49-67, Col 22, lines 12-16)

Van Gompel does not explicitly teach that said second length is less than or equal to 50% of said first length, wherein at least 70 % of said second length is positioned between said centerline and said terminal front waist edge. Arndt teaches that a crotch length that is 50% of the total core length has been confirmed to be the dimension that best accommodates the fluid handling phenomena and that articles for which the dimensions are drastically different than those taught by Arndt, the 50% relative dimensions should be reduced (e.g. in the case of severe incontinence articles), and in any case, the crotch length should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer. For males, this region is proximate the tip of the penis, which is forward of a crotch region for a female wearer. Since the crotch region taught by Arndt is analogous to the retention portion 48 in that the retention portion receives substantially all of the insult from the wearer, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the retention portion taught by Van Gompel so that the retention portion length does not exceed 50% of the length of the absorbent composite (taught by Van Gompel) as is taught by Arndt to ensure that the retention portion accommodates the fluid handling phenomena of insult from a wearer. Further, from Arndt's teaching that the crotch region should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the location of the retention portion so as to not extend much beyond the discharge location of a wearer as taught by Arndt, which in the case of a male wearer, would result in at least 70% of the length of the retention portion being located between the lateral centerline and the terminal front waist edge. ('471, Col. 9, lines 22-36)

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With respect to **Claim 2**: The absorbent assembly comprises single retention member 48 defining a retention region. As can be seen in Fig. 2 taught by Van Gompel, retention portion 48 has first and second ends corresponding to first and second boundaries. ('563, Col. 3, lines 55-60)

With respect to **Claims 3,4**: Van Gompel teaches that the retention portion is comprised of 37% superabsorbent material by weight. ('563, Col. 31, lines 9-11)

With respect to **Claim 7**: Van Gompel teaches a front body panel 52 comprising a terminal front waist edge 60 and a terminal front crotch edge 62 longitudinally spaced from said terminal waist edge 60, a rear body panel 53 comprising a terminal back waist edge 61 and a terminal crotch edge 63, longitudinally spaced from said terminal back waist edge, wherein the terminal crotch edge 63 of said rear body panel 53 is longitudinally spaced from, and forms a gap with, said terminal crotch edge 62 of said front body panel 52. The absorbent insert 32 comprises first and second longitudinally spaced end portions 82 and opposite laterally spaced side edges 80, and said absorbent insert 32 bridges said gap between said front and rear body panels with said first and second longitudinally spaced end portions overlying and connected to said front and rear body panels respectively, as is seen in Fig. 1 taught by Van Gompel. ('563, Col. 3, lines 49-67, Col. 13, line 39 – Col. 14, line 5)

With respect to **Claim 8**: Van Gompel teaches that the body panels 52,53 of the chassis are comprised of a nonwoven material. ('563, Col. 17, lines 18-22)

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With respect to **Claim 9**: Van Gompel teaches that the body panels 52,53 (chassis) comprise an elastomeric material that is stretchable along the lateral width 54 of the article. ('563, Col. 17, lines 42-45)

With respect to **claim 10**: Van Gompel teaches a pair of fasteners 36 positioned at one end of said body chassis on opposite sides thereof (Fig. 1), wherein said at least said pair of fasteners releasably engages an opposite end of said body chassis on said opposite sides thereof with a pair of leg openings being defined at least in part by said body chassis. ('563, Col. 5, lines 32-38)

With respect to **claim 11**: Van Gompel teaches a disposable absorbent garment comprising: a front body panel 52 comprising a terminal waist edge 60 and a terminal crotch edge 62; a rear body panel 53 comprising a terminal waist edge 61 and a terminal crotch edge 63, wherein said terminal crotch edge 63 of said rear body panel 53 is longitudinally spaced from and forms a gap with said terminal crotch edge 62 of said front body panel 52, and wherein a first length is defined between said terminal waist edge 60 of said front body panel and said terminal waist edge 61 of said rear body panel, and wherein a laterally extending centerline is defined half way between said terminal waist edges of said front and rear body panels; and an absorbent insert 32 comprising first and second longitudinally spaced end portions 78,79 each having a terminal edge and opposite laterally spaced side edges 80, wherein said absorbent insert 32 bridges said gap between said front and rear body panels with said first and second end portions 78,79 overlying and connected to said front and rear body panels 52,53 respectively and with said terminal edges of said first and second end portions 78,79 longitudinally spaced from said terminal waist edges 60,62 of said front and rear body panels respectively and with said

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terminal edges of said first and second end portions longitudinally spaced from said terminal crotch edges of said front and rear body panels respectively (Fig. 1), said absorbent insert 32 comprising a retention member 48 formed from an absorbent material, said retention member 48 having first and second longitudinally spaced ends and a second length defined between said first and second ends. ('563, Col. 3, lines 49-67, Col 22, lines 12-16)

Van Gompel does not teach that at least 70% of said second length is positioned between said centerline and said terminal waist edge of said front body panel. Arndt teaches that the crotch length should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer. For males, this region is proximate the tip of the penis, which is forward of a crotch region for a female wearer, and thus at least 50% of the length of the article would be between the lateral centerline and the front terminal waist edge. The crotch region taught by Arndt is analogous to the retention portion 48 in that the retention portion receives substantially all of the insult from the wearer. Further, from Arndt's teaching that the crotch region should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the location of the retention portion so as to not extend much beyond the discharge location of a wearer as taught by Arndt, which in the case of a male wearer, would result in at least 50% of the length of the retention portion being located between the lateral centerline and the terminal front waist edge. ('471, Col. 9, lines 22-36) This range overlaps the range set forth in claim 11 and thus the prior art of the combined teaching of Van Gompel and Arndt renders claim 11 unpatentable.

With respect to **claim 12**: Van Gompel does not explicitly teach that the second length associated with the retention portion taught is less than or equal to 50% of said first length. Arndt teaches that a crotch length that is 50% of the total core length has been confirmed to be

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the dimension that best accommodates the fluid handling phenomena and that articles for which the dimensions are drastically different than those taught by Arndt, the 50% relative dimensions should be reduced (e.g. in the case of severe incontinence articles), and in any case, the crotch length should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer. For males, this region is proximate the tip of the penis, which is forward of a crotch region for a female wearer. Since the crotch region taught by Arndt is analogous to the retention portion 48 in that the retention portion receives substantially all of the insult from the wearer, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the retention portion taught by Van Gompel so that the retention portion length does not exceed 50% of the length of the absorbent composite (taught by Van Gompel) as is taught by Arndt to ensure that the retention portion accommodates the fluid handling phenomena of insult from a wearer. ('471, Col. 9, lines 22-36)

With respect to **claim 13**: Van Gompel teaches that the retention portion is comprised of 37% superabsorbent material by weight. ('563, Col. 31, lines 9-11)

With respect to **Claim 14**: Van Gompel teaches that the body panels 52,53 of the chassis are comprised of a nonwoven material. ('563, Col. 17, lines 18-22)

With respect to **Claim 15**: Van Gompel teaches that the body panels 52,53 (chassis) comprise an elastomeric material that is stretchable along the lateral width 54 of the article. ('563, Col. 17, lines 42-45)

With respect to **claim 16**: Van Gompel teaches a pair of fasteners 36 positioned at one end of said body chassis on opposite sides thereof (Fig. 1), wherein said at least said pair of fasteners

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releasably engages an opposite end of said body chassis on said opposite sides thereof with a pair of leg openings being defined at least in part by said body chassis. ('563, Col. 5, lines 32-38)

With respect to **claim 17**: Van Gompel teaches a method of assembling a disposable absorbent garment comprising: providing a body chassis having a terminal front waist edge 60, a terminal back waist edge 61 longitudinally spaced from said terminal front waist edge 60, a first length defined between said terminal front waist edge 60 and said terminal back waist edge 61, and a laterally extending centerline defined half way between said terminal front and back waist edges 60,61, wherein said body chassis is formed from a laminate structure having a plurality of layers, wherein all of said layers have the same length such that a thickness of said body chassis is the same along said length of said layers; and fixedly securing an absorbent insert 32 to said body chassis, wherein said absorbent insert 32 comprises a retention region 48 comprising an absorbent material, said retention region having first and second longitudinally spaced boundaries 48,49 and a second length defined between said first and second boundaries, and wherein there is no absorbent material disposed outside of said retention region defined between said first and second boundaries. ('563, Col. 3, lines 49-67, Col 22, lines 12-16)

Van Gompel does not teach that said second length is less than or equal to 50% of said first length, wherein at least 70 % of said second length is positioned between said centerline and said terminal front waist edge 60. Arndt teaches that a crotch length that is 50% of the total core length has been confirmed to be the dimension that best accommodates the fluid handling phenomena and that articles for which the dimensions are drastically different than those taught by Arndt, the 50% relative dimensions should be reduced (e.g. in the case of severe

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incontinence articles), and in any case, the crotch length should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer. For males, this region is proximate the tip of the penis, which is forward of a crotch region for a female wearer. Since the crotch region taught by Arndt is analogous to the retention portion 48 in that the retention portion receives substantially all of the insult from the wearer, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the retention portion taught by Van Gompel so that the retention portion length does not exceed 50% of the length of the absorbent composite (taught by Van Gompel) as is taught by Arndt to ensure that the retention portion accommodates the fluid handling phenomena of insult from a wearer. Further, from Arndt's teaching that the crotch region should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the location of the retention portion so as to not extend much beyond the discharge location of a wearer as taught by Arndt, which in the case of a male wearer, would result in at least 70% of the length of the retention portion being located between the lateral centerline and the terminal front waist edge. ('471, Col. 9, lines 22-36)

With respect to **Claim 18**: The absorbent assembly comprises single retention member 48 defining a retention region. As can be seen in Fig. 2, retention portion 48 has first and second ends corresponding to first and second boundaries. ('563, Col. 3, lines 55-60)

With respect to **claim 19**: Van Gompel teaches that the retention portion is comprised of 37% superabsorbent material by weight. ('563, Col. 31, lines 9-11)

With respect to **claim 20**: Van Gompel teaches a method of assembling a disposable absorbent garment comprising: providing a body chassis having a terminal front waist edge 60, a terminal

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back waist edge 61 longitudinally spaced from said terminal front waist edge 60, a first length defined between said terminal front waist edge 60 and said terminal back waist edge 61, and a laterally extending centerline defined half way between said terminal front and back waist edges 60,61; and fixedly securing an absorbent insert 32 to said body chassis, wherein said absorbent insert 32 comprises a retention region 48 comprising an absorbent material, said retention region having first and second longitudinally spaced boundaries 48,49 and a second length defined between said first and second boundaries, and wherein there is no absorbent material disposed outside of said retention region defined between said first and second boundaries. The body chassis comprises a front body panel 52 comprising a terminal waist edge 60 and a terminal crotch edge 62; a rear body panel 53 comprising a terminal waist edge 61 and a terminal crotch edge 63, wherein said terminal crotch edge 63 of said rear body panel 53 is longitudinally spaced from and forms a gap with said terminal crotch edge 62 of said front body panel 52, and wherein a first length is defined between said terminal waist edge 60 of said front body panel and said terminal waist edge 61 of said rear body panel, and wherein a laterally extending centerline is defined half way between said terminal waist edges of said front and rear body panels; and an absorbent insert 32 comprising first and second longitudinally spaced end portions 78,79 each having a terminal edge and opposite laterally spaced side edges 80, wherein fixedly securing said absorbent insert 32 to said body chassis comprises bridging said gap between said front and rear body panels with said first and second end portions 78,79 overlying and are fixedly secured to said front and rear body panels 52,53 respectively, and with said terminal edges of said first and second end portions 78,79 longitudinally spaced from said terminal waist edges 60,62 of said front and rear body panels respectively, and with said terminal edges of said first and second end portions longitudinally spaced from said terminal

crotch edges of said front and rear body panels respectively (Fig. 1). ('563, Col. 3, lines 49-67, Col 22, lines 12-16)

Van Gompel does not teach that said second length is less than or equal to 50% of said first length, wherein at least 70 % of said second length is positioned between said centerline and said terminal front waist edge 60. Arndt teaches that a crotch length that is 50% of the total core length has been confirmed to be the dimension that best accommodates the fluid handling phenomena and that articles for which the dimensions are drastically different than those taught by Arndt, the 50% relative dimensions should be reduced (e.g. in the case of severe incontinence articles), and in any case, the crotch length should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer. For males, this region is proximate the tip of the penis, which is forward of a crotch region for a female wearer. Since the crotch region taught by Arndt is analogous to the retention portion 48 in that the retention portion receives substantially all of the insult from the wearer, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the retention portion taught by Van Gompel so that the retention portion length does not exceed 50% of the length of the absorbent composite (taught by Van Gompel) as is taught by Arndt to ensure that the retention portion accommodates the fluid handling phenomena of insult from a wearer. Further, from Arndt's teaching that the crotch region should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the location of the retention portion so as to not extend much beyond the discharge location of a wearer as taught by Arndt, which in the case of a male wearer, would result in at least 70% of the length of the retention portion being located between the lateral centerline and the terminal front waist edge. ('471, Col. 9, lines 22-36)

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With respect to **Claim 21**: Van Gompel teaches that the body panels 52,53 of the chassis are comprised of a nonwoven material. ('563, Col. 17, lines 18-22)

With respect to **Claim 22**: Van Gompel teaches that the body panels 52,53 (chassis) comprise an elastomeric material that is stretchable along the lateral width 54 of the article. ('563, Col. 17, lines 42-45)

With respect to **claim 23**: Van Gompel teaches a pair of fasteners 36 positioned at one end of said body chassis on opposite sides thereof (Fig. 1), wherein said at least said pair of fasteners releasably engages an opposite end of said body chassis on said opposite sides thereof with a pair of leg openings being defined at least in part by said body chassis. ('563, Col. 5, lines 32-38)

Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Van Gompel et al ('563) in view of Arndt as applied to claims 1-4 and 7-23 above, and further in view of Lantz et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,836,930).

With respect to **Claim 5**: The combined teaching of Van Gompel and Arndt does not teach a retention capacity of at least 20 g/g. Lantz teaches an absorbent structure having a liquid uptake of 25-40 g/g after 60 minutes under load. (Col. 14, lines 1-6) Lantz teaches a load of 0.3 psi, or 2.06 kPa, by incorporating an absorbency-under-load (AUL) determination method taught in EP 339,461 A1, published November 2, 1998, which is roughly equivalent to the pressure exerted on a sample that is subjected to the centrifuge method set forth by applicant, therefore the results taught by Lantz are concluded herein to be relevant. Lantz teaches that this structure

exhibits improved absorbent capability, therefore it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the absorbent insert taught by Van Gompel, comprised of substantially similar relative amounts of superabsorbent material and cellulose pulp (25 wt % superabsorbent) to have the absorbent capacity taught by Lantz. ('930, Col. 13, lines 64-67)

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Van Gompel et al ('563) in view of Arndt as applied to claims 1-4 and 7-23 above, and further in view of Van Dyke et al (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0027267).

With respect to **Claim 6**: Van Gompel teaches a disposable absorbent garment 10 comprising: a body chassis having a terminal front waist edge 76, a terminal back waist edge 76 longitudinally spaced from said terminal front waist edge 76 (Fig. 1), a first length defined between said terminal front waist edge and said terminal back waist edge, and a laterally extending centerline defined half way between said terminal front and back waist edges 76, wherein said body chassis is formed from a laminate structure having a plurality of layers, wherein all of said layers have the same length such that a thickness of said body chassis is the same along said length of said layers; and an absorbent insert 32 fixedly secured to said body chassis, said absorbent insert 32 comprising a retention region 48 comprising an absorbent material, said retention region 48 having first and second longitudinally spaced boundaries and a second length defined between said first and second boundaries, and wherein there is no absorbent material disposed longitudinally outside of said retention region defined between said first and second boundaries. ('563, Col. 3, lines 49-67, Col 22, lines 12-16)

Van Gompel does not explicitly teach that said second length is less than or equal to 50% of said first length, wherein at least 70 % of said second length is positioned between said

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centerline and said terminal front waist edge. Arndt teaches that a crotch length that is 50% of the total core length has been confirmed to be the dimension that best accommodates the fluid handling phenomena and that articles for which the dimensions are drastically different than those taught by Arndt (said dimensions considered herein to be substantially identical to those taught by Arndt), the 50% relative dimensions should be reduced (e.g. in the case of severe incontinence articles), and in any case, the crotch length should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer. For males, this region is proximate the tip of the penis, which is forward of a crotch region for a female wearer. Since the crotch region taught by Arndt is analogous to the retention portion 48 in that the retention portion receives substantially all of the insult from the wearer, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the retention portion taught by Van Gompel so that the retention portion length does not exceed 50% of the length of the absorbent composite (taught by Van Gompel) as is taught by Arndt to ensure that the retention portion accommodates the fluid handling phenomena of insult from a wearer. Further, from Arndt's teaching that the crotch region should not extend much beyond the discharge region of the wearer, it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the location of the retention portion so as to not extend much beyond the discharge location of a wearer as taught by Arndt, which in the case of a male wearer, would result in at least 70% of the length of the retention portion being located between the lateral centerline and the terminal front waist edge. ('471, Col. 9, lines 22-36)

The combined teaching of Van Gompel and Arndt does not teach a particular density for the absorbent insert. Van Dyke teaches an absorbent density of 0.2 g/cc, wherein the absorbent material is comprised of 50% superabsorbent and 46% fluff, and teaches that the invention provides an improved fit and improved liquid intake, therefore it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the composition of the absorbent insert of the combined

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teaching of Van Gompel and Arndt so as to have the amount by weight of superabsorbent and density taught by Van Dyke. ('267, Abstract, ¶ 0103)

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melanie J. Hand whose telephone number is 571-272-6464. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Thurs 8:00-5:30, alternate Fridays 8:00-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tatyana Zalukaeva can be reached on 571-272-1115. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Melanie J Hand
Examiner
Art Unit 3761

February 8, 2007

TATYANA ZALUKAEVA
SUPERVISOR
EXAMINER
[Signature]